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People Profile: Susan Rector

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largely mirrored the targets chosen by all libraries with frequent occurrences of the library catalog, Website, and article metasearching. The two targets which were more common in this group of twelve libraries were incorporating a journal/ejournal search (75% vs. 25.23% of all libraries visited) and a local knowledge base (16.67% vs. 2.7%). Conversely these libraries were less likely to include **Google** options: **Google Scholar** (8.33% vs. 11.71%), **Google** (0% vs. 8.11%), **Google Books** (0% vs. 2.70%).

Conclusion

The diversity of search approaches on academic library Websites also raises the question of how the success of these search boxes might be evaluated. Much of the literature on searching has primarily focused on how to design a federated search box. While some usability studies (e.g., **Augustine**,⁵ **Tallent**⁶) highlight difficulties in federated search design, few perform log analysis of the searches being entered. It would be interesting, for example, to find out how searches may differ that begin outside of the native application. The future of library search may rest outside of the native interface or even the library homepage. With the emergence of new tools such as openURL resolvers, toolbar widgets, *Worldcat.org*, and **Facebook** applications, many users are connecting into the library resources without drilling down through the traditional library homepage navigation.

This study does not attempt to scientifically determine the reasons behind any of the design or policy decisions for search usage on library homepages. However, in surveying current practice, the authors believe that the homepages of libraries offer some barometer of technology and search emphasis. The survey reveals a wide range of approaches, indicating that consolidating library search

presents ongoing challenges. At opposite ends of the spectrum roughly ten percent of the libraries offered no search functionality on their homepages while a parallel ten percent had allocated resources to develop technologies to create a **Google**-like federated search. Somewhere in the middle, the emerging prominence of some type of search option on the homepage reveals an acknowledgment of the ease of most commercial Web search engines and a desire to replicate that experience in library search. As we move into the future it will be interesting to see if this variety of external library applications continues to take a more prominent and/or consolidated role in library Web presence. 🐼

Susan Rector

BORN & LIVED: Born Asheville, NC; Lived in Raleigh, NC, Chicago, France & Virginia.

IN MY SPARE TIME I LIKE TO: Knit, buy alpaca yarn, read, and garden.

FAVORITE BOOKS: *The Blind Assassin*, *Alias Grace*, *The Yellow Wallpaper*, *To Kill a Mockingbird* — Too many to name!

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: Visual search interfaces become mainstream. Libraries retire dated **OPAC** search interfaces and migrate to next-gen catalogs. 🐼

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Endnotes

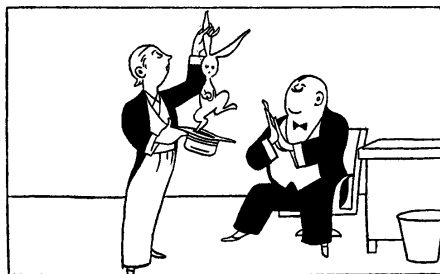
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The 21st Century Searcher: How the Growth of Search Engines Affected the Redesign of EBSCOhost

by **Michael Gorrell** (Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer, EBSCO Publishing)

What it Means to Be Usable

The Internet has changed our lives. The online world continues to grow and have a larger and larger impact on its users. In an interesting self-prophesizing cycle, the state, developments and usage of Internet sites change future states, developments and usage. As more people use the most popular Internet sites, they become used to the way the sites operate, and the users' expectations become set. As



technology progresses and sites add functionality that is popular and useful, other sites follow and add similar functionality. Common users develop an expectation that all sites will obey the same rules, logic, and work the same way.

According to *Alexa.com*,¹ a site designed to track Website traffic; these are the most heavily trafficked sites globally:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Yahoo | 6. MySpace |
| 2. Google | 7. Facebook |
| 3. YouTube | 8. Hi5 |
| 4. Microsoft Live | 9. Wikipedia |
| 5. MSN | 10. Orkut |

If you take a look at a few of these sites, you'll begin to see

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